

## Letter from Emma Garrett to Alexander Graham Bell, October 29, 1883, with transcript

COPY Pa. Inst'n for D & D "Branch for Oral Instruction" 317 S. 11th St. Phila. Oct. 29,  
1883 Private Dear Mr. Bell

Your printed questions of date Oct. 15 were received. I have answered them and return them to you by this mail.

I wrote you in reference to Oral school for the Deaf established in Scranton, Pa. — Sept. 10, 1883 — temporarily as a day school with a view to making it a boarding school.

I think I also told you that Judge Hand, Mr. Henry Belin Jr. and other influential citizens of Scranton desired me to be Principal of it.

I felt that I could not leave my present field of labor so secured them a lady that I had trained for Articulation work. Committee in charge of Scranton oral school consider this lady a good Articulation teacher but think she will not have the executive ability to manage it when they make it a boarding school — as they propose to do — for benefit of poor pupils throughout Penna. whose parents desire oral instruction for them & yet who cannot send them to cities to attend oral day schools. All poor Penna. State pupils — as you know — now have to attend the old Penna. Instn. which is a sign instn.

I declined the Principalship of Scranton school in August but was waited upon — last Wednesday — by Mr. Henry Belin of Scranton & urged to reconsider my decision. I do wish I could talk to you on the question of Scranton school — but I judge from what you wrote that it is impossible. I told Mr. Belin of your views. He thinks your plan is right for large cities — but thinks moderate sized oral boarding schools must exist for poor pupils living in remote country districts. Mr. Belin said he would gladly join your organization to

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spread oral method throughout United States. He is good, cultured, popular and rich and would have 2 influence. The miner's children who are now attending Oral day school in Scranton are so poor and dirty — that Mrs. Belin supplies food, clothing and soap for most of them. Mr. & Mrs. Belin have no connection with the school beyond the interest they feel in it & the giving of their means to it. Can you spare Mr. Belin a copy of that letter of yours in “Milwaukee Sentinel”. If so, his address is Mr. Henry Belin Jr., Scranton, Pa.

I am governed by a Board that has a few excellent men on it — a large number who are conservative to a fault — & the few remaining have opposed it so strongly & bitterly that it would have made my life a burden had not my interest in my school kept me up.

Those who opposed it most strongly refused to put themselves in the way of being converted by spending time in our class rooms & personally observing our work.

I cannot say that I am very seriously considering going to Scranton, but the temptation to go where I would hear no more of ‘opposition’ is rather strong.

I want to join your organization because I believe in segregation of the deaf whenever practicable. If you have time will you tell me what you propose for deaf children in remote country districts.

Also where you think I would accomplish most for the Deaf — in my present position or in Scranton.

Sincerely yours, /s/ Emma Garrett